

**Question for written answer P-005723/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Jan Keller (S&D)

Subject: Transparency of negotiations on TTIP

People often talk of a 'democratic deficit' with regard to the EU institutions, implying that the decision-making process is opaque and that the EU institutions are too distant from EU citizens. It is also acknowledged that EU Member States are suffering from low rates of economic growth and high levels of unemployment as a result of the financial crisis.

Practically all political parties made promises in their electoral campaigns to eliminate this democratic deficit, or at least to reduce it significantly. How can this promise made to voters be kept if negotiations on TTIP, which is considered possibly the most important trade agreement in history, are carried out in almost total secrecy, and while information on the progress of negotiations only reaches the public sporadically in the form of leaks?

We are reassured that the proposed agreement will lead to significant GDP growth in the EU Member States and to the creation of a considerable number of new jobs. If this is true, then it is all the more incomprehensible that the negotiations on this supposedly beneficial initiative are being held in secrecy.

My question consists of two parts:

1. How can the so-called 'democratic deficit' be reduced in a credible manner if not only voters, but also their elected representatives, are inadequately informed regarding negotiations on an agreement that could have a significant impact on their day-to-day lives as employees and consumers?
2. What is the reason for keeping the public in the dark about negotiations on an agreement that will help resolve such acute problems as insufficient economic growth and critically high unemployment?